

**TOY DISTRICT/DOWNTOWN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**

**April 29, 2008
MINUTES**

BOARD MEMBERS

Present: Ernie Doizaki, Matt Klein, Larry Rauch, Mark Shinbane, Michael Tansey and Paul Vert.

Absent: Richard Gardner, Donald Kanner, Howard Klein, Richard Meruelo, Thomas Payne, William Shinbane and Charlie Woo.

STAFF: Tara Devine, Raquel King, Greg Lee, Estela Lopez and Vicky McCormick.

CONSULTANTS: Qathryn Brehm, Ken Coelho and Don Steier.

GUESTS: Steve Gibson, Urban Place Consulting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Vert called the meeting to order with a quorum at 12:10am.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS- None

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Doizaki made a motion to approve the March 25, 2008 minutes, and Rauch seconded. The Board unanimously approved.

IV. FINANCIALS

Coelho reported that the Toy District is currently tracking under budget for the month of March due to a timing difference on the safety and maintenance contracts. For the month of March Toy is under budget approx. \$5,000 and DID is about even. Coelho informed the Board that Toy received \$54,000 in assessment revenue.

Coelho stated that Toy is under budget \$1,000 in trash removal costs; DID is over budget \$1,200. Possibly due to an allocation error which is being looked into and will be corrected on the next months' report.

Shinbane asked if there were surcharges on the trash bills. McCormick informed the Board that Consolidated Waste Management, the BID's trash hauler, eliminated taxes on the bill, which lowered the price of CCEA's contract from \$6,000 per month to \$2,800.

Coelho reported that Toy is projecting to be even for the year; however, due to beginning of the year liabilities cash is projecting to show a deficit of approx. \$13,000 at year-end.

DID received \$137,000 in assessment revenue; ending cash at March 31 is \$316,000. Coelho stated that the cash from Toy and DID combined is projecting to break even at year-end.

Rauch asked if the assessment collection was normal at this point in the year. Coelho stated that yes the amount collected is normal at this point, but he will not have more solid information until about September. Coelho added that the BIDs have had enough cash to pay off the line of credit at the beginning of the year and current operating bills as well as immediate future projected costs. The BID's are overall in decent financial condition.

Coelho reported that the first quarter reports were submitted to the City, as well as the reviewed financial statements. An outside accounting firm was hired to perform the Review.

V. OPERATIONS

McCormick reported that trespassing in the Toy District increased in March and part of April due to issues with loiterers on Winston, 4th and Boyd Streets. CCEA has participated in several meetings with residents on Winston Street and the LAPD in an effort to keep the Toy District clean and safe.

McCormick reported that although DVD piracy continues to be a problem in the Toy District, illegal food vending continues to decrease; she stated that the food vendors are now at L.A. Live.

McCormick informed the Board that activity overall had decreased from 2007 to 2008. For example, In January 2007, there were 86 encampments; January 2008 there were only 10. Health & Welfare Checks- 257 in 2007; 56 in 2008. Loitering- 71 in 2007 and 32 in 2008.

McCormick then reported that blocking the sidewalk continues to be a problem in DID. Business owners are complaining that people are blocking their doorways. McCormick informed the Board that blocking the sidewalk includes people, their clothing, encampments and other items covering the sidewalk. McCormick added that the Safer Cities Initiative (SCI) teams are working on this issue.

McCormick informed the Board that drug activity has increased. The BID is working with the LAPD, specifically SCI, to decrease drug activity on Stanford Street and Towne Avenue. McCormick added that the DWP will be placing high voltage lights on those streets.

In DID, loitering and health and welfare checks have increased due to the warm weather.

Vert complimented the BID safety patrol on their professionalism when escorting kids from Para Los Niños to Inner City Arts.

McCormick then gave the board comparable statistics for DID January 2007 to January 2008. Drug Activity 1,239 in 2007; 243 in 2008. Encampments 3,000 in 2007; 411 in 2008. Shopping carts 453 in 2007; 539 in 2008.

McCormick informed the Board that the LAPD provided anti-terrorism training to the BID's public safety and maintenance teams.

Lopez reported that at Councilmember Jan Perry's request, she is working on providing the Councilwoman with a report on the impact of apparent State parole personnel cutbacks in Central City East. Lopez informed the Board that in 2006, two parole agents were assigned to Central Station, working with the LAPD and SCI to locate parolees at large. Over 800 arrests were made when the agents were at Central Station. Last fall, the agents were removed from Central and not replaced. Lopez stated that Councilwoman Perry would be meeting with the Governor's staff to request that the agents be reinstated to Central.

Lopez described the improvement in pedestrian safety provided by the new light fixtures on City streetlights on several blocks of Skid Row. The lights cost \$4,000 each, are energy efficient and have a tamper-proof base. Lopez informed the Board that the May 7th Skid Row walk would begin at 7pm instead of 6pm because the general manager of the Bureau of Street Lighting would be attending to describe the new lighting. The lights were funded by the Mayor's office as part of the Safer Cities Initiative.

VI. RENEWAL

Gibson informed the Board that the Fashion District's petition campaign is now in its fourth month, and has not as yet reached its goal.

Lopez reported that she had a conversation with representatives of property owner Stanley Black regarding their holdings in the area of possible expansion of DID. They were receptive to a meeting to discuss the possibility. Lopez also met with Charlie Woo. Woo stated that he would be thinking about what the BID needs to do to gain the support of Toy District stakeholders. Woo agrees that the BID renewal will be an uphill fight in the Toy District.

Devine reported that 40% of expansion area A-1 on the district map is owned or represented by Stanley Black. Area A-2 is a promising area, because four of the property owners currently own property in DID. Area A-3 consists primarily of Coca-Cola properties. Staff has been unable to secure a meeting with representatives of Coca-Cola, but will continue to attempt to do so.

Gibson described potential changes in assessment methodology for DID. One possibility is to keep the current zones and add building square footage to the formula. Gibson stated that he would have the formulas at the May Board meeting. He will demonstrate that change can be made without significantly affecting the costs.

Devine added that if square footage is not added to the existing formula, the BID will be negatively affected in the future, especially if/when taller buildings are constructed. Devine informed the Board that the building square footage will lessen the lot assessed amount.

VII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Historic Preservation

Devine reported that the LA City Cultural Affairs Department (Office of Historic Resources) is proposing a comprehensive overhaul/update to the City's historic preservation laws. Devine referred to a summary of proposed changes contained in the board packets.

Central City Community Plan

Devine reported that the public outreach process has just begun. The LA City Planning Department's initial goal is to have small focus group meetings with area stakeholders, and that staff will arrange a briefing for the Toy/DID board. Devine stated that she would circulate possible dates for the meetings as soon as she received them from City Planning.

VIII. MARKETING

Brehm reported that the new Toy District Shopping Guides had been updated. Funds for the maps came from the CRA and sponsors who paid for advertisements. The maps will be distributed and available on the website.

IX. NEW BUSINESS- None

X. ADJOURNMENT- The meeting of the Board was adjourned at 1:40pm.